

Sweet child in time

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Summary: The fireplace turned, the waiting lady has met her hero. Doctor was once on time and return to the TARDIS with Reinette. This is just a little piece of it might have went, while aiming for a realistic and believable approach. The Doctor/Rose is just strongly hinted at.

Sweet child in time

Author's Note: Just a little story set at the ending of the Girl in the fireplace, in a version where the Doctor made it back in time. Though there is no established relationship, the possibility Doctor/Rose is strongly hinted at. Hope you will like it.

And, of course, I don't own anything, the characters are property of BBC, etc...

****Sweet child in time****

"Oh, and Reinette?"

The woman in question turned away from the window and smiled at the tall man in front of her fireplace.

>"Yes Doctor?"
"What day is it?"

"22 December, 1753."

>The fireplace turned.<p>

"What happened Doctor?"

"Just going to make a quick trip, Mickey."

He pulled a level and spun a sphere before declaring joyfully.

>"Coordinates set for France, Christmas day, 1758."<p>

Mickey began to retreat, shaking his head at the tall man operating the console.

>"No way. Sorry mate, but I ain't coming there ever again."<p>

The Doctor looked a bit wary, but decided it was nothing and with a shrug answered.

>"Alright then Mickey, no one is forcing you."
Rose saw Mickey was prepared to make a remark and if his scowl was anything to go by, it wouldn't be a nice one. She motioned for him to shut it and answered herself.

>"You are going to invite her to come with you, aren't you?"<p>

She waited to see if the Doctor would notice the pronoun. With him, not with them. But he, although an alien one, was still a man and that meant obliviousness to 'hints'.

>"As a matter of fact I already did Rose. She wanted to see the stars so much. A bit of a holiday, she deserves that much after today, don't you think?"<p>

Some things are worth getting your heart broken for. Indeed, Sarah-Jane, indeed, thought Rose. She forced a smile to appear and tried to seem to be above the whole thing.

>"Yeah, I suppose she does. Where will you take her?"<p>

He finally turned to her and with a gleam in his eyes exclaimed.

>"I thought about the endless waterfalls of Rivian. Or the purple sunset on Solwein? Which one did you like more?"
'Do you take all your companions to the same few places Doctor?' Rose wanted to ask but decided that it really wasn't time and place for that particular discussion. But then, was it ever?

>"The waterfalls would be more suitable, I think."
"Count me out Doc, not in the mood for sight-seeing right now." Shouted Mickey as he made his way through the maze of corridors into a room which held the biggest collection of video game he has ever seen.

>"Let them have their waterfalls." He muttered to himself. "No matter what the Doctor says, they're gonna get into trouble. I just know it."<p>

And so, after picking up Reinette, she, he and Rose set for the famous waterfalls of Rivian.

The trip has been a success. Well, more or less. Well, less.

>One of the locals thought having a woman at each side a bit too much and tried persuading the Doctor to sell him Rose.
"You could keep the pretty one!" Was the alien's reasoning, which didn't bode well with the Doctor. He wanted to shout at the man that Rose was beautiful, as he had told her before (that 'for a human' part was obviously added just to preserve his dignity from acknowledging he was actually having feeling for a member of lesser species- he blamed his upbringings for that bit).

>But before he could say a word, he felt tugging at his arm from 'the pretty one'. At that moment he felt furious at her. Where was her sense of adventure? Always maintaining her decorum, doing everything as her governess taught her to and never letting her feelings get in a way of gaining better social status. But he wasn't a French aristocrat, he was the Doctor and his moral code had different rules than hers.<p>

The world hasn't stopped while he was thinking and before he could

come up with a clever plan to save the day he observed that Rose was quite capable of handling this particular situation on her own.

"But wouldn't it feel better knowing you've got the woman thanks to your charm and personality rather than just bought her as though she was a thing?" The alien stopped in his tracks, his eyes, all five of them, focused on Rose. She really hoped she appeared to be far more confident that she felt, for truly, she has seen far too many alien prisons. From the inside.

Fortunately for her, this particular alien seemed quite prone to discussion.

"Oh, but this way everyone sees how hard I had to worked to have the cash to be able to afford her."

The Doctor decided to step in. No reason to spoil Reinette's first trip with Rose being charged for offence. Wouldn't be the first time.

"No selling here, sorry, we're just tourists," he began pulling both Rose and Reinette towards TARDIS, "we should be going anyway."

But Rose didn't let herself to be dragged to the blue box. And so she turned to the alien for the last remark.

"I truly pity you, you know? For you will never experience the joy of a freely given, unconditioned love."

And with that she made a hasty retreat to the safety of the TARDIS, lest she would overstay her welcome.

"Everyone aboard?" Bellowed the Doctor once the doors shut behind her and without waiting for an answer started pushing buttons and pulling levers, thinking about the events that had just taken place.

He was frankly quite relieved it hasn't come to the usual running part, as Reinette wouldn't get very far in those period dresses of hers.

Rose and Reinette stood on the opposite sides of the jump seat, neither knowing quite the right thing to say.

It the end it was Rose, who spoke first, choosing the easy way out.

"I think I will head to the bed."

>"Sure thing. Sleep well!" Shouted the Doctor as Rose retreated.<p>

That left the two of them in the console room. They sat in silence for a while, her poised and proper with her best court manners and him twitching as though he has been sitting for too long.

Finally, Madame de Pompadour turned to him and gently inquired.

"At the end of the day, the King returns to his Queen. What about you, Lord of Time?"

"No one to return to. They're all gone. You've seen it in my mind."

>"I have seen you were determined to travel alone for the rest of eternity. But then you invited that child along. She is just a common, young, uneducated thing. Why?"<p>

She slowly itched closer until she was a mere breath away.

>"She saved my life," sighted the Doctor, "and I suppose I wanted to show off a bit." The Doctor replied, a bit sheepishly.<p>

The blonde women looked the slightest bit stunned.

"She saved your life? Not the other way around? You must have had a bad day."

>"Yeah, I suppose I had."<p>

And they've laughed together. That could have been the end of it, but the Doctor couldn't help himself.

"Though you are unfair to her. She is brilliant. Just today, you've seen it. Just being so kind to everyone, even such a pompous and rude alien. To everyone she meets. She's - She's brilliant."

Reinette was carefully observing the man, noting how his eyes seemed to light up at the mention of the girl.

"Is suppose she is in her own way," she smiled slightly.

And they say in silence for a while.

"Doctor? May I ask for a favour?" It was unusual indeed to hear Madame de Pompadour herself asking for a favour in such a quiet tone. Yet the Doctor chose to ignore it and everything it might imply (as he though he knew what _favour _would mean for a professional courtesan).

"Sure. Just don't ask me to take me to see a dead relative. Did that once and it ended quite nastily, I would rather not experience that again, thank you." And he smiled at her, trying in vain to lighten the atmosphere. She gently shook her head.

>Her request was most certainly not like anything he had expected to hear.<p>

"I ask for a leave, Doctor. I want to return to France."

>Upon seeing the maniac smile she came to love turn into frown, she hastily continued.
"Please, do not think me ungrateful, for I adore the sheer beauty of the stars and the wonders of the great dark between them, but somewhere in my mind I find myself missing my old life, minus the clockwork men, that is."

>Doctor's face was one of indifference, only his eyes betrayed his dismay upon her inevitable departure.
"Back into King's arms?"

>Reinette just laughed softly, but surprisingly without remorse.
"I would find them occupied, I am afraid. Maybe Diane today, or perhaps Marguerite Catherine, Irene or Lucie? Not the Queen, she locked him out a long time ago."

Then her voice was hushed to a mere whisper.

"I miss my daughter."

And she continued unfazed, in a little speech that sounded a bit too much prepared in advance.

>"You have shown me how little we humans know, how little we have seen. And I intent to start from the beginning. For what are stars and compare to the wonders of our little Earth? I will travel. Sweden sounds nice, Marie always remember it fondly."
"Marie?" The Doctor furrowed his brow in confusion.

>"Her Ladyship, the Queen, of course. She was brought up there." Said Reinetter matter-of-factly.
"I believe her manner of travelling would involve less running and certainly less danger than yours, if what Rose and Mickey were telling is anything to go by. You do not need me here, you are happy enough with Rose at your side and we both know she is far more suitable for such a position. The girl even seems to enjoy the mad dashing about."

>The Doctor scratched his head. It never occurred to him anyone might not be so partial to running as he. And danger? Those bits of trouble at least kept him on his toes!<p>

Well, to each his own.

"Alright then, I suppose I should go and set coordinates for France."

>"Thank you Doctor." And smiled at him and he smiled back, but their smiles didn't quite reach their eyes.<p>

They've arrived on time for once, in the late hours of Christmas Day and made their well-wishing of merry Christmas as well as goodbyes.

"Farewell, Madame de Pompadour." Rose even manages a small courtesy, which had the older woman smiling fondly. They came to an understanding, during the brief time they've spent together.

("I've seen his face when he talked about you Rose. You belong here with him."

>"He wants you here too. More than me."
"He may want me, but he needs you. Someone to run with.")

"Farewell, dear Rose. You have a brave and kind heart. Do not lose it."

"Doctor?"

The man in question turned swiftly, and focused his attention on the woman curled on the jump seat.

"Yes Rose?"

"Will she be alright? I mean, Reinette?" Even though they had a bit of a rough start, Rose, in the end, came to appreciate the woman, if only for her skill in making her life bend to her wishes. She certainly didn't wish for her to suffer, but the twist in Doctor's features told her, that the eve of Madame de Pompadour's life wasn't an easy one.

"Of course she will be alright. At least in public. But it won't be an easy time for her. Her daughter will die the next year, only 10 years old. And her father will follow quickly. She will die of tuberculosis in her 42 years. Such an end for such a remarkable woman." Sighed the Doctor.

Rose smiled sadly, trying to offer him a bit of comfort.
>"But at least she will be remembered. I mean, even in my time,
everyone knows her name. She would have liked that."<p>

Doctor looked at Rose and his heart swelled, though not for the poor
French woman. Just as he always said, there she was - his Rose,
offering kindness to everyone.

"Yeah, she most definitely would have liked that." And he
smiled.

End
file.